
Jen Burris

HEIFER

So reader the song sings I'll be your slave.
I'll feed you if your face breaks open.
The way a stranger acknowledges a stranger.
With a face like a convulsion.
When your face convulses I'll need you.
To ask for forgiveness.
Ask me for forgiveness.
And then we'll go on.

There is nothing memorial about the memorial highway.
There is nothing memorial about the memorial highway.

The cows in the pasture eat the cow lilies.
Which are yellow.
Which are flowers.
Which smell like skunks.
The yellow flowers are called skunk lilies by their smell but I call
them cow lilies for the animals that eat them.
As I call you reader. As I call you.

The cows do not eat the lilies really because then they would die.
But the lilies the cows eat
in the landscape by association.
Not a curse but lily means poison.
Cows and lilies compose the meat smell of spring that is fear as in
the skunk.

When the smell comes out.
Into our warm dampness.
As a happiness does.

And there the river.
Through it.
We cannot account for that immensity.
Only use it.

Does the all the beauty in the world make you want to go places?
The ball bouncing back and forth.
Supreme.
Our sedentary lives.

The vast vast in the vast amusement.
The mast of the ship our little Cartesian clicker.
After spices and sweet.
And flesh dear reader.
Meat.
Work it out.

The boat in the yard turned over. Useless.
Except for being painted an alluring color green.

And being propped under a magnolia tree. Death.
It is more painful the longer it takes.

I am not sorry. But I will say so.
See how politely. Even the sweep swept under. And

the dust landing on wept.
We are inside now.
We are safe now.
Do you see.

Attraction is an elimination a vampirism from the outside.

The girls sip the sodas and snack at the big bags of candy.

Delicate and happy like monks.

The men stare.

Ravenously civilizing.

The story finishes somewhere.

The cock the cock the cock.

Every thing exchanged for one is the cost of the loss therein.

I dismembered my love all night.

Is repression true.

Like the body of the drowned that comes back to the shore of the town a little while later.

Everything is productive.

I just walk off the porch into the morning.

It matters that is it a spring rain into which I disappear.

I am completely superficial.

I forget deeply.

I can barely talk from this day on my mouth like a carnation on your lapel. It devastates me to say this.

The world is fine. The world is fine. A small pyre in spring is a way to frig to bring it in.

We are not adequately prepared for death.

The well-put song of popular mourning impresses with its sharpness then dulls all feeling completely. Imagine your saddest friend

stumbling home muffled. The future huffs paint in a garage. Willing
to try anything. I want us to help you die and all of us to die together.

Completely.

My vacant face your patron saint. I am lovely. I dream.

Only granting a circumspect enjoyment to the saddest sounds I
know. Attachment. And then finally they

take the body away.

To look at the unmoving surface of a chest makes
a play of light put the movement of the breath back in. The eye
needs. Hope is deceit and the whole house shakes. Under.

Physical necessity.

We are gloriously unhappy. We overflow the pews. The congregation
really apologizes. Ambulances travel pretty fast along these roads.
Very saving.

We are over here. But you are not here yet.
Is what a beacon is.

How come the poem doesn't need an excuse but I do.

LOVE AND HAPPINESS¹

There is a chink in the window through which I look at the neighbors.
I know the sex acts and nothing else.

Did you ever imagine in your childhood this is what you would do.
Or that you would be dying now. In the coincidence of moments
ending this one and your life.

I give up precisely.

The smoke turns all the paper yellow but my drawings and the
greeting cards on the fridge do not mind. This is where she died.

Fire does not travel if there is nothing to eat. Strife does.

Dispensing the whole can of Raid into the insect colony. It is amazing
how much can come up through a crack. All the night noises.

Love is sweet.

I love to watch you growing lonely. The lonelier I love you this is
why I call you on the phone. There is no reason.

How does news travel.

News travels fast.

I am included in a life that is happening far away and it feels good.
My love for you is a spectator sport. Not that we would ever touch

but still the deep fucking. It is the distance that I want. And I know
I know it. This is called surety. Different from surfeit though I am
not sure how. I want you everyday more deeply and the more I forget
about you the more salient the attraction becomes.

I am going to compare love to a garden.

A woman screams.

A family leaving

just this little note on the fridge .

Oh we are gone.

As if to the grocery but more obliterated.

More war

More automobile accidents

More choking in restaurants

More falls from ladders

More lawn mower accidents

More heart attacks

More suicides in the bathroom

More school shootings

More bridges collapsing

More drownings

More falls through the ice

More disappearances on hiking trips

More bodies found in the park

A slip of the tongue.

I compare love to a garden.

¹after Al Green